

**Lost Pines Master Naturalist Board Meeting Minutes  
July 9, 2015**

President Julia Akin called the July Board meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. at the Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative in Bastrop. Board members in attendance were: Julia Akin, Mike Barrett, Carroll Moore, Joan Estes, Jim Estes, Frank May, Rick Johnson, Larry Gfeller, Marsha Elrod, Paula Weiskoff, Beth Moore, Michal Hubbard, and Audrey Ambrose. Five LPMN members were present at the meeting and three guests were present as well.

The first order of New Business presented was the report from LPMN Bastrop River Rally (BRR) leader Mike Barrett. Mike presented a Power Point presentation on the Rally plan identifying the activity leaders and LPMN volunteers. In the presentation he identified five activity areas; Brush-Up Recreational Hikes, Interpretive Hikes, Children's Programs and Displays. Mike as the Management leader will also oversee Traffic and Parking, the Information Booth, and First Aid station. The presentation included a map of the site for review and a mark-up of the parking area. Volunteers are encouraged to arrive as early as 7:00 a.m. to set up the site; the event is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. -12:00 noon. There will be some scheduled afternoon events. Joni Groom and Lance Reid (with KBCB) have been working with Mike and the project leaders to complete the preparation activities for the BRR and many hours have been spent coordinating the event between the KBCB Board and LPMN Committee.

Other items for discussion included: there will be a shuttle provided for the event but the hours of service have not yet been determined, trail maps will be handed out to the participants, and a fun run will be scheduled for 9:00 a.m. A question was presented as to whether there would be a survey available to the community to evaluate the event. There is no survey available at this time but it could be considered for the future.

Julia asked members if there were any additions or corrections to the May 7, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes. There were no additions or corrections. Audrey Ambrose made a motion to accept the minutes as presented and Carroll Moore seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

**Old Business**

In the first order of Old Business Larry Gfeller reported a new project for the chapter, the Outdoor Adventure Steering Group. The Group met recently to brainstorm the project with suggested topics for development. The project does not have a defined time line and there are no deadlines. At present five areas of interest have been identified: Riparian Habitat, Patterns in Nature, Edible Plants, Poisonous Plants, and Night Hike/Frog watch. Other ideas are also being considered. The primary purpose of the Group is to increase member participation in Chapter activities and increase interaction with the community while providing community educational opportunities. The Group may not have an update for the next Board Meeting but Larry indicated that there would be an update early in 2016.

In the second order of Old Business Julia informed the Board that the KBCB Board and the LPMN Board have recommended that there be a Board representative from each organization to sit in on the (other) respective Board Meetings to facilitate the exchange of information and

sustain the cohesion currently experienced between them. Julia will represent LPMN at the KBCB Board Meetings and Joni Groom will represent KBCB at the LPMN Board Meetings.

#### New Business

The second order of New Business was Frank May presenting the LPNT update. The recent closing of the park gate at 8:00 p.m. and opening at 7:00 a.m. has had a positive impact on the condition of the grounds. The vandalism has significantly decreased resulting in less trash and reduced traffic. Frank and a team of volunteers, including members from Tahitian Village, are providing the manpower for the opening and closing of the gate. This was a test pilot to see if this would work and they have been very pleased with the results. He also stated that he would eventually like to turn this over to the County or Park officials to continue with this practice. Frank reported that they have a new K-9 Unit in Bastrop and interest has been voiced that this will significantly reduce the use of drug traffic in the area as well.

Julia welcomed Paula Weisskopf to the Board. Paula will be transitioning into the Vice President position in January to replace the current Vice President Mike Barrett.

Larry Gfeller reported on Minors As Volunteers for the third order of business. He asked members if there were any revisions to be made to the Minors AsVolunteers Guidelines. Rick Johnson asked for a revision to the third bullet in the General Liability Release section. The bullet should read: Parent/guardian also *releases and* indemnifies the parties etc. Ronnie also recommended that the Agreement of Release and Indemnity form be revised to include the date of birth of the child requested to participate on projects. There were no other revisions to the Guidelines or the Form. Ronnie Lanier made a motion to accept the Guidelines and Form as revised and Jim Estes seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the revision and the motion carried.

The fourth order of New Business was Audrey Ambrose's MN Volunteer Management System (new TMN timekeeping system) Committee update. The committee met prior to the July Board Meeting and that progress is being made on the recording of all members' volunteer and training hours as required for the conversion to the automated system. Cheryl Foster from TMN will be scheduling a Committee Training meeting later in the month to train the Committee Members to the new system. The members will then be responsible for training LPMN members to the automated system to be implemented by the end of the year. The challenge for members will be to turn in their hours in a timely manner as the system drops hours submitted over 45 days after the scheduled event. There are a lot of questions about the conversion to the automated system and they will be discussed at the training session.

Audrey also discussed the Member of the Year award to be presented each year at the December meeting. The nomination forms will need to be available by September 1<sup>st</sup> and returned by October 1<sup>st</sup>. The criteria and form will be posted on the web site. In addition, the information will be presented at the August meeting.

Carroll Moore submitted the monthly Treasurers report. The State Farm grant for \$500 will be utilized for Caldwell County projects. There is approximately \$6,096 currently in the bank. He indicated that there has been a lot of activity in the account with \$14,400 processed through the

account. The \$3,000 budgeted amount for the Training Class has \$206 remaining making it a self-sustaining activity for the chapter.

The fifth order of business was reported by Michal Hubbard, 2016 Training Committee Chairman. She announced that the committee will be meeting on Thursday July 23<sup>rd</sup> at 4:00 p.m. at the Bastrop AgriLife building in Bastrop to evaluate the 2015 Training Program and begin plans for the 2016 Training program.

Julia reported on the sixth order of business for the LPMN Junior Naturalist Program. The team is working hard to get the program set for a two year training program for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. The two year budget is projected for \$ 6,000 with plans to establish a scholarship program for qualified students. The plan is designed to provide classes in a school setting every other week for 1 ½ hours at 4:30 p.m. The fee for the program is proposed to be \$40-50. The initial plan is to begin the program in Bastrop however; they have not been able to contact the school administrator to discuss the plans. Jim Estes and Ronnie Lanier suggested that the Lockhart School system is already committed to LPMN teaching 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders and this would be a viable alternative. Julia said she would pursue contact with Lockhart and Bastrop to seek commitment from the school system for the program.

The seventh order of business was report by Julia as well. She informed the Board of the current plan to schedule a LPMN Board retreat on September 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> at Cibolo Nature Center in Boerne. She presented a power point presentation of the facility and available amenities. After a group discussion it was decided that the dates would change to the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> to get a lower rate for the meeting room. She also negotiated for reduced room rates at the hotel. It was decided that the chapter would fund \$600 toward expenses that would include the meeting room, breakfast and lunch. All other expenses would be covered by the individual Board members. Beth Moore made a motion to approve \$600 for retreat expenses and Marsha Elrod seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried. Julia will provide the Board with a retreat packet including an agenda and tentative program. She asked members for agenda items in advance of the retreat.

Another order of business was the question of how often should we have Board meetings? Should we continue with every other month or should we meet monthly? After a brief discussion the Board decided to continue with the every other month meeting schedule on the first Thursday of the odd months. The next Board meeting is scheduled for September 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative at 4:00 p.m. The Board chose to change the meeting time from 5:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Food will no longer be provided by the chapter at the Board Meetings.

There was no additional business. Rick Johnson made a motion to adjourn and Frank May seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7: 30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Estes  
Secretary LPMN